

MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 3

ROYAL RUMBLE EDITION

JAN. 21-27

Warrior's Short Reign Ends

HOGAN REPEATS AS RUMBLE KING AFTER SLAUGHTER WINS WWF BELT

MIAMI----In an evening in which heavy Middle East heel storylines were tempered by flag-waving patriotism, Sgt. Slaughter----six months ago given up as an over-the-hill AWA and independent performer----defeated The Ultimate Warrior (with an assist from Randy Savage) in 12:47 to win the WWF world heavyweight championship Saturday night at the ROYAL RUMBLE. The upset came almost two hours before Hulk Hogan repeated as the RUMBLE champion, eliminating Earthquake John Tenta for the victory in 65:16.

The Slaughter win, debated at length during the week by Titan officials in the wake of Operation Desert Storm after heavy TV alignment of Sarge with Saddam Hussein, was foreshadowed by a pre-match angle involving the Warrior and Sherri Martel. Playing temptress, Sherri tried to seduce Warrior into committing to a title defense against Randy Savage after the Slaughter match. After a few sly grins, Warrior spit in Sherri's face and refused, setting Savage---seen on a dressing room camera---into a rage.

Slaughter's pre-match hype was softened a bit. Hussein's name was never mentioned, Slaughter did not wear the Arab headgear to the ring and after an early clothesline by Warrior, General Adnan quickly retreated to the showers.

The early minutes were all Warrior as he clotheslined both Slaughter and Adnan, ripped the Iraqi flag and shoved it in Sarge's mouth. About two minutes in, Sherri appeared and grabbed Warrior's leg as he backed into the ropes. Sherri ran, Warrior chased her and was coldcocked by Savage, who bashed Ult with a television light stand.

After a couple of minutes of Warrior stammering to the ring, Slaughter took to the offense and bearhugged Ult at 6:55. After an escape at 9:00, Slaughter applied the camel clutch but Warrior was beyond the ropes. Warrior began his Hogan comeback, hit Slaughter with three criss-cross clotheslines and a shoulderblock.

ROYAL RUMBLINGS

---Security was tight at the Miami Arena in case of incidents surrounding the Slaughter/Adnan angle but no trouble was reported.

---Rick Martel set an endurance record of 53:06 in the RUMBLE before being ousted by Davey Boy Smith.

---The so-called "30th man" never materialized.

Sherri, back at ringside, was hauled in by Warrior, military pressed and tossed Dave Hebner-style onto Savage. But Slaughter kneed Ult in the back and as the ref was distracted, Savage creamed Warrior with his Macho King sceptre and Slaughter pinned the champ to win the belt at 12:47. Boos enveloped the stunned crowd but Slaughter did not turn up the heat by waving the Iraqi flag. Warrior dashed to the locker room in chase of Savage.

The loss ended a WWF title reign of nine months for Jim Hellwig, only eight months after his old Blade Runners partner Sting dropped his NWA belt. MATCH RATING: DRAW...not for the wrestling but for Savage's and Sherri's stellar work.

Hogan scored his repeat by clotheslining Tenta out in the marathon bout. A mystery 30th man, rumored to be either Ricky Steamboat or Genichiro Tenryu, never appeared and Honky Tonk Man, billed in promos for the RUMBLE, was scratched.

Randy Savage, involved in an earlier angle to set up Sgt. Slaughter's title win, was to have been the 18th man but his two-minute period went by without the former WWF champion entering. The reason for his absence went unexplained but doubtless will be told in future WWF weekly episodes.

The endurance awards went to Rick Martel, whose 53:06 topped Ted DiBiase's 47:18 record of last year. Martel was the sixth man in and lasted until the final 3 1/2 minutes, the 25th man out of the 29. Greg Valentine, who has already worked shots for Herb Abrams' UWF, lasted a surprising 44:21. Valentine, third man to appear, was the 14th to depart.

Bret Hart and Dino Bravo kicked the RUMBLE off but Bravo was out in the 3:19 when Valentine rolled Dino over. Hart lasted the first 21:39 before being the fourth elimination.

Key matchups included squareoffs between Martel and Jake Roberts. But after a near-DDT, Martel tossed Jake out at 27:14.

The Undertaker (Mark Callaway) scored eliminations on Hart, Butch Miller and Kerry Von Erich before
(Continued on Page 2)

MATWATCH

Page 2

Vol. 4, No. 3 / Jan. 21-27

HOGAN WINS

(Continued from Page 1)

the Road Warriors eliminated Undertaker at 34:50. Callaway lasted 14:50.

Luke Williams may have set the all-time brief run, lasting only four seconds when he walked in and was promptly dumped by Earthquake at 51:35.

Interestingly, Tugboat, the last competitor in, immediately went right after Hulk Hogan but Hogan tossed him aside in 1:20. Davey Boy Smith had a big run, eliminating three of the final eight: Hennig, Haku and Martel before being bumped out by Brian Knobbs.

Knobbs and 'Quake both tried to work over Hogan but Hulk rallied to end Knobbs with a legdrop and a toss before the finish with Earthquake. MATCH RATING: POWERSLAM...not quite as dramatic as last year and the finish became too obvious but still, this is as fun to watch as any battle royal.

RUMBLE RUNDOWN

ROCKERS D. ORIENT EXPRESS (19:20): Fine, fine opener combining aerial skills and solid contact work by Tanaka and Diamond. The most spectacular moves were a backflip by Shawn Michaels onto Tanaka from the top rope and a double flying cross body block from the turnbuckle onto the floor by both Rockers onto the O Ex. The finish came when Shawn reversed a boomerang and Marty Jannetty rolled up Tanaka. POWERSLAM.

BIG BOSSMAN D. BARBARIAN (15:15): One of the WWF matches where the booking overcame the wrestling. Ray Traylor worked hard early, though the pace slowed in the middle as Barbarian bearhugged Bossman into a rest. Barbarian scored a one of five near-falls with a rollup when Bossman missed a splash. The end came after Bossman escaped a piledriver. As Barb climbed to the top for a cross body, Bossman reversed it for the pin. DRAW-PLUS.

THE MOUNTIE D. KOKO B. WARE (9:12): How would you like to have followed Slaughter winning the belt? Tons of fans were headed for the concessions during this one which was one with a weak modified clothesline by Rougeau. BOMB-PLUS.

TED DiBIASE/VIRGIL D. DUSTY & DUSTIN RHODES (9:40): I still don't believe this is Dusty's swan song but it's inconsequential. After a pre-match attack, the Rhodeses rallied to chase Ted & Virg. Dustin carried the action until his Pop tagged in at 5:23. He elbowed Ted and went for the sleeper. Dustin tagged and scored a hard dropkick on Ted. But Dustin sold a knee injury when he rammed it into the turnbuckle as Virgil dodged. As Ted held Dustin, however, Virgil clotheslined DiBiase as Dustin ducked. Ted decked, chopped and clotheslined Virg out of the ring. Dusty tagged in at 9:15 but Ted quickly packaged him for the pin 25 seconds later.

What made this one was what the WWF does best: that one magic moment that sometimes is two to three years in the making. Ever since that first fingerpop and call for Virgil in 1987, people have wanted to see the valet stand up to Ted. This night, he did. As DiBiase demanded Virgil strap the Million \$ Belt around his waist, Virg hesitated, then dropped

the belt. Ted implored him to pick it up. Virgil did. Only he then smashed it across DiBiase's forehead, "knocking Ted cold." Virgil walked away to immense cheers. DRAW-PLUS... primarily for tremendous post-match.

MORE RUMBLINGS

Lots of comments on the phones about the Slaughter win. Most were happy the tenor of the storyline was diluted but more than 80 per cent of my callers didn't like the idea of three more months of exploiting the Persian Gulf...Any doubt what the main event and finish of WRESTLEMANIA VII is now?... My own view is this was the most entertaining and best overall WWF pay-per-view show ever. And at least not having Slaughter wear the headgear and not use Saddam's name during the show some concession to taste. Having said that, I didn't like slapping the belt on Slaughter because of where I know we're headed. I find the whole idea of having Gene Okerlund pump Hulk Hogan's visits to bases and the wrapped-in-the-flag scenario an equal exploitation of a war to build WRESTLEMANIA and make money. I think it's contemptible and crass and there has to be some line for entertainment promoters, even though some MATWATCHers have taken me to task in the mail and on the phone this week that the only thing important is for Vince to make money and ever how he does it, that's fine with them. But I see him as nothing more than the Chuck Barris of pro wrestling, albeit a wealthy one.... MATWATCHers were very positive on the show with 72 per cent giving a positive rating, 26 per cent negative and two per cent so-so or no opinion....Even though hardcore fans have never cared for The Ultimate Warrior, you have to feel bad for Jim Hellwig. Just like Sting, his was a case of the heir apparent being totally fouled up in the marketing aspect. This guy never had a chance when the first seven weeks and, genuinely, all the way to SUMMER SLAM, the focus was still on Hogan, who was made more of a martyr in his loss than he often was as champion....No real serious production problems although we missed three key eliminations during the RUMBLE, off from last year's one.

MATWATCH 25 SCALE

CROWD ENTHUSIASM	4.2
ANNOUNCING	3.2
QUALITY OF MATCHES	3.0
TELEVISION PRODUCTION	4.2
OVERALL EXCELLENCE OF SHOW	3.8
TOTAL RATING	18.4

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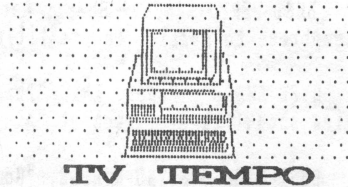
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MATWATCH

Page 3

Vol. 4, No. 3/Jan. 21-27



(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]:

Undertaker d. Sonny Blaze;

Davey Boy Smith d. Rick

Hunter; Jimmy Snuka d. W.T.

Jones; Kerry Von Erich d.

Kent Carlson; Rick Martel d.

Rico Frederico; ROYAL RUMBLE REPORT; Orient Express d. Terry Davis/Cliff Sheets. RESTHOLD.

[SUPERSTARS]: Jake Roberts d. Bob Bradley; (UPDATE) Rhodeses vs. DiBiase/Virgil; Earthquake d. Jim Evans; Hart Foundation d. Black Bart/Jones; Curt Hennig d. Danny Brazil; Bushwhackers d. Dennis Allen/The Gladiator; (BRO. LUV) WWF interrupts w. bulletin as Sean Mooney "clarifies" position of WWF by reading "statement" from Jack Tunney and Sean Mooney offers commentary on Persian Gulf situation before airing edited comments of Sgt. Slaughter on title match; (ROYAL RUMBLE REPORT); Nasty Boys d. Armstrong/Pete Sanchez. RESTHOLD.

(LPWA) - Reggie Bennett d. Bad Girl; The Beast d. Sindee Paradise; Misty Blue Simmes/Heidi Lee Morgan d. Randee Thomas/La Gata; Magnificent Mimi d. Anita Alvarez; Terri Power d. Diane Von Hoffman; Lelani Kai/Judy Martin d. Bambi/Hosaka; LOUISVILLE SLUGGER: Jim Cornette d. The Beast/Ashley Kennedy. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(USWA/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Steve Lawler d. Jimmy James; Mike Davis d. Bill Dundee; Terry Gordy/Steve Williams d. Chris Germany/Steven Dane; Gary Young d. Ed Robinson; (GO FOR THE GREEN BATTLE ROYAL) One Man Gang wins when Eddie Gilbert decks Jeff Jarrett & tosses bag of money to Gang. RESTHOLD. [BEST OF CHAMPIONSHIP]: (VIDEO) Fabulous Ones; Tony Anthony/Eddie Gilbert/Sam Lowe d. Ben Jordan/Freezer Thompson/T.D. Steel; Joseph Magliano/Black Magic d. Cody Michaels/Danny Davis; Jerry Lynn d. Sgt. O'Reilly; (VIDEO) Jerry Lawler d. Willie B. Hert by DQ; New Kids d. Scorpions; Lawler d. Terrance Garvin by DQ when Memphis Mafia runs in. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(PRO WRESTLING '90) - [THE TRIAL/HEARING]: Festus/Jim Powell testify as to why they should retain the Georgia tag team championship. (EVIDENCE) 1) Clip of Billy Black/Mr. Wrestling d. Mountain Man/Chief Little Lynn by cheating, 2) Clip of Festus/Powell d. Avengers winning cleanly, 3) Steve Pritchard/Black d. Festus/Powell when Mr. Wrestling takes arm out of sling & uses knucks on Powell; (From UCW) Rick McCord d. T.C. Carter; (CLASSIC) Wilbur Snyder/Unknown Partner d. Passindock/Skandor Szabo. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(AWA: LOOKING BACK) - Buck Zumhofe vs. Steve Regal double countout; (From 1983) Hulk Hogan d. Masa Saito by DQ. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(UWF) - Greg Valentine d. Sonny Blaze; Iceman Parsons d. Dusty Wolfe; Don Muraco d. Chris Michaels (Rick Rude watching at ringside); B. Brian Blair d. Mike Williams; David Sammartino d. Louie Spicolli; Ivan Koloff d. Steve Ray; (CAPT. LOU'S CORNER) Valentine guests; (SEGMENT) Killer Kowalski (with Nikolai Volkoff at ringside) plugs UWF. RESTHOLD.

(USWA/WMC) - [REPLAY] Fabulous Ones attack on Lawler; Fabs d. Michaels/Lynn when Jim Cornette bashes Cody w. racket. Steve Keirn piledrives Michaels & Lynn chairbashed until Lawler chases Fabs w. iced tea dispenser; (SOUTHERN TITLE/From MID-SOUTH) Jeff Jarrett d. Brian Lee in tourney finals; (SEGMENT)

Downtown Bruno reintroduces Robert Fuller & new Stud Stable Curtis Thompson & Pit Bulldogs; Pit Bulls d. Steel/Davis; Matt Borne d. Sgt. O'Reilly; Robert Fuller/Curtis Thompson d. Jeff Gaylord/Freezer Thompson but Gaylord attacks Freezer after Freeze is pinned; (ANGLE) Corny goes nuts when Lawler says Jarrett will be in his corner Sunday night at Mid-South Coliseum. NO RATING OFFERED....last 40 minutes interrupted by war briefing.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Motor City Madman/Curtis Hughes d. Greg Sawyer/Allen Iron Eagle; Freebirds d. Italian Stallion/Reno Riggins; (WNN) Gordon Solie w. Paul E.'s interview w. Ric Flair and Horsemen "Basic Training" video; (From WCW) Barry Windham/Arn Anderson brawl w. Renegade Warriors; Renegades d. Magnum Force; Konan d. Chuck Coats; Sid Vicious d. Man Mountain Bailey; (WCW TV TITLE) Tom Zenk d. Bill Irwin to retain belt. RESTHOLD.

[SUNDAY WCW]: (WCW TV TITLE) Zenk d. Master Blaster Blade to retain belt; Michael Wallstreet d. Mike Hart; (REPLAY) Paul E. makes Missy Hyatt cry; (VIDEO) Paul E. "workout;" Terry Taylor d. Dave Johnson; DOOM d. Brian Morley/Ray Diamond; Renegades d. Magnum Force; (8-MAN) Flair/Anderson/Windham/Vicious vs. Sting/Steiners/Brian Pillman in progress as show ends. DRAW.

[MAIN EVENT]: (8-MAN) Flair/Anderson/Windham/Vicious double DQ vs. Sting/Steiners/Pillman (continued from WCW); Southern Boys d. Brock/South; (DANGER ZONE) Paul E. w. Meadowlands hallway skirmish between Flair/Scott Steiner; Brad Armstrong/Tim Horner d. Freebirds by DQ when Brad thrown OT; (VIDEO) Missy Hyatt's workout. POWERSLAM.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: Jim Duggan d. J.T. Smith; (UPDATE) Slaughter on virtues of Saddam Hussein; New Orient Express d. Brooklyn Brawler/Blaze; (ROYAL RUMBLE REPORT); Roberts d. Bradley; DiBiase d. Brazil; Koko B. Ware d. Black Bart; Jimmy Snuka d. Warlord by DQ; Nasty Boys d. Armstrong/Sanchez; Von Erich d. Carlson; Rick Martel d. Frederico; Bushwhackers d. Allen/The Gladiator. RESTHOLD.

(WCW/SYN) - [WORLD WIDE]: Konan d. Coats; Madman/Hughes d. Sawyer/Iron Eagle; (WRAPUP) Gordon Solie w. Flair on winning NWA title; Renegade Warriors d. Magnum Force; (WCW TV TITLE) Zenk d. Irwin to keep belt; (SULLIVAN'S SALOON) Kevin w. Steiners; Freebirds d. Stallion/Riggins; (VIDEO) Horsemen II at cheap motel; Terry Taylor d. Mike Thor. RESTHOLD. [WCW PRO]: Master Blasters d. Tim Parker/Scott Allen; Rick Steiner d. Mike Samples; Minotaur d. Keith Hart; Southern Boys d. Ed Brock/George South; Brian Pillman d. Sgt. James Earl Wright but Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker backjumps after & the 2 beat on Brian until he ducks double clothesline & double dropkicks the Patrol away; Other winners: Freebirds; (VIDEO) Horsemen II; (DANGER ZONE) Paul E. w. Flair. RESTHOLD.

(SUNCOAST PRO) - Man Mountain Brody d. Mr. Everything; Giant Outlaw d. Mark Mearo; Rocky Johnson d. Johnny Martel; Jumbo Baretta d. Kickboxer (Al Hardimon). BOMB-PLUS.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Dutch Mantel, WWW: "You know, when women invented P.M.S., men invented ESPN." 2. Mantel, WWW, to Tony Schiavone: "You're just like a woman with P.M.S. If you're gonna be out here all crampy and everything, I'm just gonna shut up." 3. Jim Cornette, WMC: "This audience looks like a massive monument to genetic inef-

MATWATCH

Page 4

Vol. 4, No. 3 / Jan. 21-27

ficiency." 4. Mantel, WWW, on Konan: "He's just like anti-freeze. He keeps you from getting hot in the winter and he stays cold in the summer." 5. Jim Ross/Paul E. Dangerously, PH: "You and Missy have very, very similar characteristics. If she lived at home with her mummy and her daddy, then you'd have a whole lot in common." (PED) "If she lived at home with her mummy and her daddy, maybe she could buy a whole outfit instead of that nightie she wears on TV." 6. Bobby Heenan, PTW, on Jake Roberts: "He beat up 2 boy scouts last week. They helped him across the street and he didn't want to go." 7. Gorilla Monsoon/Heenan, PTW: (GM) "Jake the Snake is 85% ready." (BH) "And that's his good eye." 8. Roddy Piper, ROYAL RUMBLE, on Mr. Fuji: "He's seen more ceilings than Michelangelo." 9. Cor- nette, WMC: "Jerry Lawler, you're just like Memphis. You were built on a bluff." 10. Heenan, PTW: "You can't afford me with cash."

11. Mantel, WWW, on Terry Taylor: "Maybe he just makes people mad." 12. Paul E., PH: "Evander Holyfield sent Michael Hayes a thank-you note, saying thank you for not becoming a boxer." 13. Ross/Paul E., PH: (PE) "I'm just like Clark Kent and tomorrow night, you're gonna see how I become Superman." (JR) "Missy has two big bundles of kryptonite for you." (PE) "I wonder where she keeps them stored." 14. Cornette, WMC, on Michaels/Lynn: "They look like two Cabbage Patch Dolls and the referee looks like a grown-up Beaver Cleaver." 15. Hawk, RR: "If life is like a rollercoaster, then you don't want to take a ride on either of us." 16. Ross/Paul E., PH: (PE) "If you don't start letting me use my material, I'm gonna start working with Tony Schiavone." (JR) "There ain't no anchor tied to your posterior, pal." 17. Godiva, FAMILY FEUD, on WCW wrestlers: "They carry passifiers in their wrestling bags." 18. Piper, RR, on Earthquake grabbing a nose: "...a handful of boogers." 19. Joe Pedicino/Cornette, LPWA: (JP) "That's a travesty." (JC) "Travesty? I thought that was something you hang on a wall." 20. Cornette, LPWA, on The Beast: "She's so huge, she has to shop for clothes in the Junior Moose section."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Arn Anderson, WWW: "I'm going back to being a killer." 2. Paul E., PH: "El Gigante's not a threat to anybody." 3. Paul E., PH, on Schiavone: "Last year, he sold his house and moved to Connecticut. I could walk all over him."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Ric Flair, WWW: "Did you think I was just going to ride into the sunset?" 2. Cornette, WMC: "You ain't never see a woman in lust, have you, Dave Brown?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. THE CLAMPETTS (Heenan on Dusty & Dustin). 2. THE COMMON FAMILY (Ted DiBiase on Dusty & Dustin). 3. THE JETHRO BODINE OF WCW (Ross on Sid Vicious). 4. TRIAL SIZE (Cornette on Bill Dundee). 5. CELLULITE KING (Piper on Earthquake).

BEST PICTURES - 1. ROYAL RUMBLE, Slaughter walking off with title belt. 2. RR, Savage clobbering Warrior with sceptre. 3. RR, Savage bashing Warrior with light stand. 4. RR, Marty Jannetty's flying cross off the top onto Tanaka. 5. WWW, Conan's aerials. 6. WWF-SU, Butch Miller licking child. 7. FAMILY FEUD, Sid Vicious winking at Liberty. 8. RR, Jim Hellwig's grin at Sherri Martel. 9. WCW/WME, Horsemen-Sting/Steiners/Pillman match. 10. RR, Virgil smashing belt across DiBiase's face.

BEST PERFORMANCE - Sherri Martel, RR, for playing temptress to Warrior in pre-title match angle.

HYPE AWARD - Piper, RR: "This is the greatest pay-per-view show I've ever been at."

BEST SIGN - ROYAL RUMBLE, "Gomer is a traitor."

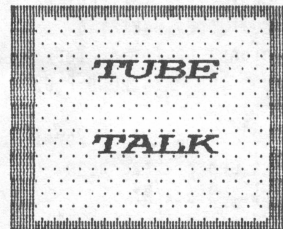
SEXIST REMARKS - 1. Mantel, WWW, for P.M.S. comments. 2. Ross/Paul E., PH, for Missy "kryptonite" comments.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Barry Windham, WWW: "...biting off more than you can chew." 2. Piper, RR: "...give 'em an inch, they'll take a mile." 3. Monsoon, RR: "...close but no cigar." 4. Piper, RR: "...only time will tell."

BLOOPER AWARD - GLOW girls showing a sponge with words Family FUED on it.

DREADED GLITCH AWARD - TBS, for programming decision to change time of TBS from promoted 4:35. Ross opened POWER HOUR plugging 6:05 Sunday for WCW in voiceover, then cut to lead-in, discussing 4:35 time which was scuttled. Then, Jim is forced to say "check your listing," which would not have had the right time. If you didn't watch POWER HOUR, you wouldn't have known of change and still may have been confused if you did. TBS did this one...not the announcers.

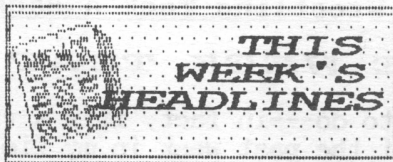
BOO AWARDS - 1. WWF, while Vince at least tried to edit out some inflammatory remarks from BRO. LUV's Sgt. Slaughter segment, having Honky Tonk Man talk about Slaughter "taking his place alongside President Saddam Hussein" was yet another example of insensitivity and tastelessness. 2. WWF, Slaughter winning the belt. 3. TBS, for fouling up announcers with Sunday program time changes. 4. Robert Fuller, WMC, for story about kicking his dog.



If you wonder why the decision was made to switch the start time of WCW to 6:05 (ET) Sunday, so were WCW folks. I have been assured it was a TBS programming snafu, not the promotion's fault. A late decision was made to block the shows together as lead-in to the HAWAIIAN OPEN golf tourney rather than to go to CAPTAIN

PLANET in-between. WCW had to do some fast re-editing and Jim Ross had to revoice MAIN EVENT a third time because it was reduced from a one hour, 55 minute show to an hour.... About 500 turned out for a Suncoast Pro Wrestling taping Saturday night in Palmetto FL....Don't be surprised to see at least one angle spill into the food court at the CNN Center Atrium during the CLASH....NBC's war coverage booted the WMC-TV show around Saturday. First, it was moved to 1:30 p.m. Then, the SEC basketball game preceding ran long. Then, the final 40 minutes was interrupted by a Pentagon briefing....One correction: the Mid-South Coliseum matches were Sunday night this past week....Lawler announced a north Mississippi card on TV which will be part of a Youth Evangelism Explosion weekend. Interesting concept, wrestling and preaching....Baltimore radio show host Larry Katz is organizing a WRESTLEMANIA VII trip through Commerce Travel. Call 1-800-YES-TRAVEL for details. Mention you heard about it in MATWATCH....I'll be hanging in there this week, another uncertain one---to be sure. Regardless of your feelings on the conflict, remember the folks in the Gulf. FSB.

**NATPE
NEWS**



(The following items are from various reports from the National Association of Television Programming Executives in New Orleans last week.)

IS IT SIGNED?: Syndicator Max Andrews and Global guru Joe Pedicino reportedly reached agreement for Andrews Entertainment to syndicate GWF. At week's end, it was unclear if papers were signed. The complicated deal would have Global paying Andrews a monthly production and syndication fee and taking over USWA network slots. Andrews would then pay Jerry Jarrett a percentage to cease USWA (except for Jarrett's Memphis programs).

THE BOOTHS: At least seven wrestling groups had booths at NATPE: WWF, WCW, the Global/Lucha Libre/LPWA consortium, GLOW and Andrews (who was also selling his TUFF TRAX show). Herb Abrams (UWF) was walking the convention floor with Steve Williams and Greg Gagne (AWA) was also making the rounds.

TITAN SIDE: WWF had its ring but only held one match on the convention as opposed to more than a dozen in past years. Many of its stars were there but Vince McMahon was apparently not there. Wife Linda was.

WORKING HERB: Abrams approached Bill Eadie, Global's talent coordinator, about working for UWF but Eadie politely passed. Abrams is still claiming he'll have the UWF on 150 television stations this year.

IN WCW'S CORNER: The Steiners appeared early for WCW. Sting was in New Orleans two days and El Gigante for a couple. Gigante drew a lot of amazing stares.

GLOBAL/LPWA: Global claims 18 station commitments from the convention. Jim Cornette, Eadie, Nick (Big Bully) Busich, One Man Gang, Terri Power and Team America were among the stars at the booth. But the biggest attention went to 7-foot-6 Canadian giant Paul Bunyan (Greg Huggins). Bunyan was interviewed by at least a dozen media outlets covering the convention, including CNN's Bill Tush.

NO FULL-TIME GRUDGE: Jesse Ventura did not agree to a full-time deal to do GRUDGE MATCH, the new syndicated series, for Genesis Entertainment. Genesis wanted Ventura to commit to 39 weeks plus a second year of 195 shows (Genesis wants to make GRUDGE a 5-day-a-week strip if successful as a weekend show this fall). Jesse, instead agreed to do about a third of the shows as commentator with Tim Brando and Lyle Alzado.

BAD RUMOR: A rumor which gained momentum but had no basis at NATPE had bodybuilding guru Joe Weider (whom Vince McMahon is attempting to displace in the weight field) negotiating to buy WCW from TBS. Instead, word has Weider discussing a bodybuilding show for Turner.

STILL GLOWING: GLOW syndicators were selling 104 episodes of the show in the can, targeted at independents.

WANING DAYS: The convention ended Friday but by Thursday, many station execs were leaving because of the war erupting.

MATWATCHING

TIGHTER SECURITY: CNN Center has been under tight controls since the Persian Gulf war began because of fears of terrorism against the news headquarters. Brief talks were held of moving CLASH XIV out of the Atrium but as of the weekend, that had been scrapped.

IS EL READY?: An angle taped at last Monday's tapings between Ric Flair and El Gigante will apparently begin a brief post-CLASH program between those two. I'm told WCW is doing it because of the big investment TBS has in Jorge Gonzales. But you have to wonder, since he's been yet to impress even in preliminaries.

DUSTY DAYS: We're told Dusty Rhodes has been quite congenial and team-oriented in his early days with WCW. He's sought Jim Ross' advice on TV formatting and reportedly has a different attitude toward TBS officials than the clouded way in which he left in 1989.

AT THE MIKE: Dusty will be doing color on CLASH XIV and at least on WRESTLE WAR '90. I don't think the Ross/Rhodes pairing will be nearly as good as Ross/Dangerously but I'm willing to give it a chance. The man has been a good personality before he shoved himself down viewers' throats in the late 1980s. Paul E. will likely be used as a reporter.

BLESSED ASSURANCE: I have been assured by at least three parties that no attempted coup of Jim Ross on TBS is underway or even being plotted.

THE TRIAL: Production values are weak and it should have been done in an actual courtroom. But the GEORGIA ALL-STAR format of having a trial (Pedicino insists it's just a "hearing") to determine if Jim Powell & Pestus should hang onto their Georgia tag belts is a neat innovation.

ONCE AGAIN: Robert Fuller has been imported again as the lead heel for Memphis and, well, you know what's happened twice in the last three years when Fuller was around in the old Continental and successor CWF promotions. Fuller's new Stud Stable includes Curtis Thompson and the Pit Bulls. Matt Borne is also in the Memphis lineup.

KONAN'S DEAL: Konan has had a big rise the last six weeks. His showcasing at STARRCADE gained him some WCW TV dates. Pedicino made a deal with the LUCHA LIBRE star for Global. To show you the kind of guy Konan is, he offered not to go to his Titan tryout in Miami after agreeing to the Global. Pedicino released him, telling Konan if he didn't go, he'd always ask if he could have made it. If his career is not fouled up in the same fashion Vince did Owen Hart under a mask, he'll have a good run.

BYE, BYE NORMAN: Look for Mike Shaw to surface with Global after winding up his WCW run next week. Some TBS programmers became alarmed after hearing reports Norman was going to come out as an Iraqi during part of his personality transformations of late.

JEFF WINS: Jeff Jarrett defeated Brian Lee to win the Southern title last Jan. 14 in Memphis. He was in the Jerry Lawler/Bill Dundee corner Monday night for their rematch with the Fabulous Ones.

THE WEEK THAT WAS

This was not the easiest issue of **MATWATCH** to do---in fact, it's a virtual miracle the edition made it to the printers. The events of the past week in my field as a television news director diverted my attention from the fictitious and insignificant conflicts of professional wrestling. Seeing a live drama unfold which affects our entire lives puts our daily activities into perspective.

A number of you have left messages on my machine in the past days with great understanding of where my attention has had to be. If you have been following the coverage from CNN and the three major broadcast networks, you know what demands have been on anchors and correspondents. But similar pressures have been on news people in your local markets. People are hungry for information about how their loved ones are affected and scores of families in your area are sharing their nervousness with us.

How are journalistic decisions of this nature made? In my station (WBBJ-TV, Jackson TN), we were watching **WORLD NEWS TONIGHT** as ABC's Gary Shepard began describing live what we feared would happen.



We had been prepared for three weeks that the network would probably become CNN-like in its coverage for at least the first few days.

When it became obvious we would not be able to air our 6:00 news, I huddled my reporters---many of whom are in their first jobs and who had already put in a full day---and told them, "You're getting your first taste of what it's really all about. This is going to test your skill and your drive to be able to offer the information people will need. And right now, the story is seeing how our friends and neighbors are reacting---where were they when war broke out, what emotions are they experiencing? How vehement are opponents of the war? We have about three hours to put it all together. Go to it...and good luck."

Within an hour, our production and engineering people had offered extraordinarily creative suggestions for presenting the local angle to the war story at 10:00, including a make-shift set for a **REPORTERS' ROUNDTABLE** I narrated at the tail end of the broadcast with my people. My weathercaster, a captain in the Tennessee Army National Guard, prepared an illustrated piece on the types of planes used in the attack and their capabilities.

It is not easy being a news director in a small company with a low budget and where stretching resources is a daily fact of life. But my team performed beautifully and our broadcasts in the last week have been among our best.

Yes, wrestling has had to take a back seat. But it did come up on a couple of occasions. We had to filter through upcoming local and syndicated programming for any possibility of potentially distasteful or untimely material. Being the wrestling aficionado on the staff, I was asked if our one show, **WORLD WIDE WRESTLING**, would have any questionable material. I said, "Questionable, maybe, but nothing to do with the war or Iraq. They're not into the Middle East story at the moment."

The other instance was when I picked up the afternoon newswatch on the Tennessee Associated Press wire about three hours before the war began. The very last item, after several stories on how our 25,000 Tennessee troops were ready, was

one detailing independent wrestling promoter Tommy Heggie's decision to toss in the towel on his Mid-South Wrestling Association cards. Heggie was commenting on how his fund-raisers for high schools no longer made the money they once did and how his young wrestlers would usually lose money if they had to travel to the matches. Heggie offered an observation more honest than virtually any promoter I've ever heard: "Most people say today, 'Why should I pay four to six dollars to see your guys when I can stay at home and watch Hulk Hogan on TV?'"

Rather ironic, isn't it? An item on pro wrestling was the last non-Persian Gulf related story on the state AP newswatch for nearly 48 hours.

MATWATCH 1990 ANNUAL

Because of my responsibilities to local TV coverage during the Persian Gulf outbreak, the **MATWATCH 1990 ANNUAL** was delayed getting to the printers until this past Monday. I hope you will all be patient. I hope mailing will still occur by Jan. 31.

You still have plenty of time to order: (PRICE) [U.S./CANADA] \$12; [OVERSEAS] \$20.

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